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MUNICIPAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS REGIONAL PLANNING IN ALBERTA

A JOINT REPORT OF

ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS AND COUNTIES

and

ALBERTA URBAN MUNICIPALITIES ASSOCIATION

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MUNICIPAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS REGIONAL PLANNING IN ALBERTA

Attitudes of Selected Urban and Rural Municipalities
on Regional Planning Agencies in Alberta

A Report by the Joint Working Committee
of the
Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
and the
Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

October 7, 1980

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Joint Working Committee of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

MEMBERSHIP

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Councillor Bill Boyd, Vice-President, AAMD&C from County of Grande Prairie

Jack Edworthy, Executive Director, AAMD&C

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

Alderman Craig Reid, City of Calgary

Councillor Kay McKenzie, Town of Vegreville

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Graham Murchie, Director, Inter-Agency Planning Branch

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FOREWORD

The Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association are pleased to present this report to the Government as representing the views of our membership on the regional planning system in the Province. We hope that these opinions will assist the Government in taking those steps required to improve land use planning at the regional level.

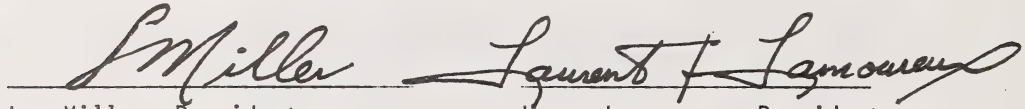
The report was prepared by the Joint Working Committee of the AAMD&C and the AUMA, comprised of members of the Executive and staff of both Associations. Technical assistance was provided to the Committee by representatives of the Alberta Planning Board and the Department of Municipal Affairs.

The opinions presented herein are based upon responses received from seventy-six municipalities, fifty-nine urban and seventeen rural. While this represents only one-quarter of the combined membership of the two Associations, we nevertheless feel that the results are significant and worthy of attention. The problems and benefits identified in the regional planning system are shared -- to a greater or lesser extent -- by virtually all our members, urban and rural.

It is not enough, however, to just identify areas where problems exist and where improvements are needed. As major participants in the governmental system, we share with the Province the responsibility to respond to problem areas by developing solutions, so that the needs of the public are met in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Land use planning is a critical area of shared responsibility. The willingness of the Minister to assist both Associations to present their views is most encouraging, and we look foward to a continued collaboration in the development of solutions which will benefit all participants.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Marvin E. Moore, and the Chairman of the Alberta Planning Board, W. D. Isbister for inviting both Associations to participate in this effort and for providing staff to assist us in our joint deliberations.



Les Miller, President
Alberta Association of
Municipal Districts &
Counties

Larry Lamoureux, President
Alberta Urban Municipalities
Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the period November 1979 to May 1980, a poll was conducted by the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties and by the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, to solicit the views of their members on the regional planning system in Alberta, as input to a Study being undertaken by the Alberta Planning Board.

Responses to the poll were received from 76 municipalities, which represent roughly one-quarter of Alberta's total. The urban municipalities contributed 59 responses, representing 22 percent of all urban municipalities, and the rurals contributed 17, for a response rate of 35 percent.

It should be noted that since Improvement Districts and Special Areas are *not* members of either Association, they were not included in the poll.

The opinions of those rural and urban municipalities responding to the poll differed quite dramatically. While the urban respondents were generally supportive of regional planning, believing it to be doing a good job, the rural respondents were predominantly negative towards it.

Almost half of the comments from the urban respondents viewed regional planning as *doing a good job, providing needed advice, encouraging organized regional development* and so on. On the other hand, the rural respondents said such things as *the regional planning commission is too dictatorial; there is a loss of local autonomy,* and *there is an urban membership bias on the commission.*

Five major areas of concern were identified:

1. the way in which municipalities are represented on the commission may be biased in favour of either urban or rural interests;
2. the feeling that regional planning resulted in some loss of local autonomy;

3. regional plans and some planning tools were seen to be too restrictive;

4. the level of services to municipalities and the speed with which the commissions delivered them were viewed as needing improvement; and

5. the need was seen for an examination of the Provincial role in regional planning.

The pattern of comments -- favourable and unfavourable to regional planning -- varied quite significantly from one regional planning commission to another, apparently in response to different ways of doing things in different areas.

The Joint Working Committee of the AUMA and the AAMD&C will utilize the findings of this Study in a collaborative effort with the Alberta Planning Board and the Department of Municipal Affairs, to develop recommendations and explore feasible actions. These recommendations will appear in a subsequent report.

This report should be seen, therefore, as only a beginning to the process of identifying and resolving problems in the way municipalities relate to the Alberta regional planning system. It is hoped that it will stimulate debate and assist the Joint Working Committee in its task of developing recommendations for the Government.

MUNICIPAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS REGIONAL PLANNING IN ALBERTA

Attitudes of Selected Urban and Rural Municipalities on Regional Planning Agencies in Alberta

1. PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

1.1 In February 1980, as a result of interest expressed by some local elected officials, a Joint Working Committee composed of representatives of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C) was established as a vehicle for providing municipal input into the Regional Planning System Study, being conducted by the Alberta Planning Board.

1.2 This study was initiated to review the operations of the Province's eight regional planning commissions (RPCs), with a view to identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and recommending areas for improvement.

Since municipalities are perhaps the principal clients of the system, their views about its effectiveness were seen as having considerable significance, and hence there was support from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Alberta Planning Board for participation by the two municipal organizations.

1.3 Since the AAMD&C had already conducted an informal poll of its members, soliciting their views on regional planning, the Joint Committee decided to build upon this initiative and to use a similar format for a questionnaire to be sent to the AUMA member municipalities.

Questionnaires were sent, therefore, to the 263 members of the AUMA, and to the 48 members of the AAMD&C.

1.4 This report analyzes the comments of some 17 rural and 59 urban municipalities on the operations of the regional planning commissions, as contained in their responses to the questionnaires sent out by the two associations.

Since some municipalities are located in that area served by the Planning Services Division of the Department of Municipal Affairs, rather than by a regular RPC, some comments are directed at that agency. Recognizing that that group provides many of the services of an RPC, this report speaks of the broader generic organization -- the regional planning agency -- rather than restricting itself to only the regional planning commission.

1.5 The body of the report is organized into the following parts:

- . methodology
- . summary of urban responses
  - overall response
  - response by regions
- . summary of rural responses
  - overall response
  - response by regions
- . comparison of urban and rural responses
- . concluding observations
- . appendix: detailed data.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 The questions asked in the poll sent out by each organization were as follows:

a) "How you see your Planning Commission is now constituted and operating."

b) "Is your Planning Commission doing a good job or are there shortcomings? If there are, please provide details."

c) "Your thoughts on the advantages and disadvantages of a Regional Planning Commission."

d) "Do you belong to a present Regional Planning Commission? If not, would you prefer to belong to one."

e) "Suggested areas for changes."

2.2 It should be noted that these questions contain some degree of overlap and imprecision which, to some extent, has created problems in interpretation and analysis. These have been offset partly by expressing the results in rather more general terms than might otherwise be the case with a more detailed and precise questionnaire. It was felt that it was more important to obtain a general set of opinions quickly, in the first instance, rather than to delay the process in the interests of a methodologically more suitable poll, which would create timing problems in connection with the municipal elections in mid-October.

2.3 Each of the 76 responses were examined as to their *contextual* information. For each response, the following questions were asked:

1. is it an urban or rural municipality?
2. if *urban*, is it a city, town or village; if *rural*, is it a county or municipal district?
3. to which RPC does it belong?

2.4 A *content analysis* was then performed on each of the 76 responses, with the comments, statements, recommendations and apparent attitudes recorded in the order they appeared, with the source noted.

The 301 individual comments seemed to fall into 39 different subject areas, which could be grouped into four major categories.

Two of these four major categories had more or less strongly emotional values -- "Advantages and Benefits" and "Disadvantages and Shortcomings" -- while the other two were somewhat more neutral -- "Operating Conditions" and "Recommendations".

It should be noted that a small number of the comments referred to the role of the Alberta Planning Board or of the Provincial Government, rather than to just the regional planning agencies. These occurred especially in the "Disadvantages and Shortcomings" category. This should be borne in mind when conclusions are drawn from the summary tables.

2.5 An example of how the content analysis was performed will illustrate that, while every attempt to be rigorous and logical was made, there is nevertheless a small but certain element of subjectivity involved in the assignment of comments to subject areas. Cross checking by other researchers ensured that errors of assignment are kept to an acceptable minimum.

For example, the issue of "Availability of Planning Expertise" appearing under the major cateogry of "Advantages and Benefits", incorporates such comments as: "good advice and services", "good information source", "direct access to staff", and "municipalities couldn't afford expertise themselves". In this way a large number of comments were reduced to 39 issues divided between the four major categories.

3. SUMMARY OF AUMA MEMBERS' RESPONSES

3.1 Response Rate

The AUMA poll resulted in a response by 59 municipalities, representing 21 percent of the Alberta total, or 22 percent of AUMA membership.

The response rate, excluding urban municipalities who are not members of an RPC, is 24 percent which is slightly higher than the overall response rate of 22 percent.

When the responses are broken down into those from cities, towns and villages, it will be seen that the greatest proportional response was from the cities, but that the greatest numerical contribution came from the towns.

Figure 1 RESPONSES TO AUMA QUESTIONNAIRE

Status	Number of Responses	% Urban Municipalities*	% Total Responses
Cities	8	67	14
Towns	31	28	52
Villages	20	18	34
TOTAL	59	21	100

*As of September 1, 1980 (DMA)

It is interesting to note that the cities have more comments in their responses, averaging about 9 each, compared with an average of 4 for the towns, and only 3 for the villages.

3.2 Overall Findings

The 59 responding urban municipalities contributed a total of some 240 comments, covering all 39 subject areas.

Figure 2 COMMENTS OF AUMA RESPONDENTS

Subject	Number of Comments
Advantages & Benefits	
1 Doing a good job	45
2 Availability of planning expertise	32
3 Encourages organized regional development	14
4 Forum for conflict resolution	6
5 Regional perspective to municipal planning	5
6 Essential to small municipalities	5
Disadvantages & Shortcomings	
1 Too dictatorial - loss of local autonomy	21
2 Slow to respond	18
3 Rural & small town membership bias	7
4 Too much provincial interference	6
5 Geographical area too large	5
6 Members lack information about others' issues & areas	4
7 Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective	3
8 Urban membership bias	2
9 Too many committees & meetings	2
10 RPC is a source of conflict	2
11 Overlapping functions & loyalties	1
12 Errors in legal procedures	1
Disadvantages & Shortcomings (continued)	
13 Inequities in provincial/municipal funding	1
14 APB hearings too complex	1
15 RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff	1
16 No coordination with bordering regions	1
17 Interpersonal management problems	1
Operating Conditions	
1 Growth pressures	3
2 Good service from DMA/APB	3
3 Isolated; no need for RPC	2
4 Importance of leadership in RPC operations	1
Recommendations	
1 Should be more advisory	12
2 Need more information about/by RPCs	6
3 Should be primarily S.A.A.	6
4 Need for boundary changes	6
5 Do not wish membership in RPC	6
6 Clarify RPC roles	3
7 Need for change in membership	2
8 S.A.A. to local municipal governments	2
9 Clarify provincial roles	1
10 Need for local RPC offices	1
11 Need for Alberta-trained planners	1
12 Need orientation for new members	1
TOTAL	*240*

*S.A.A. refers to Subdivision Approval Authority

A closer look at Figure 2 shows that in the "Advantages and Benefits" category, "doing a good job" was the most common comment, while "availability of planning expertise" ranked second.

On the negative side, in the "Disadvantages and Shortcomings" category, the top ranked criticism was that the regional planning agencies are "too dictatorial" resulting in a "loss of local autonomy" while the second most common criticism was that the regional planning agencies were "slow to respond".

The most common recommendation was that the regional planning agencies "should be more advisory".

Comparing a summary of comments in each category (Figure 3), we see that of the 240 comments, 107 comments (45 percent) were categorized as "Advantages and Benefits"; 77 comments (32 percent) were categorized as "Disadvantages & Shortcomings"; while 47 comments (19 percent) were categorized as "Recommendations".

It should be noted that 7 comments in the "Disadvantages and Shortcomings" category and 1 comment in the "Recommendations" category referred to the role of Provincial rather than the regional agencies.

Figure 3 SUMMARY OF AUMA COMMENTS

Subject Category	Number of Comments	% AUMA Comments
Advantages & Benefits	107	45
Disadvantages & Shortcomings	77	32
Operating Conditions	9	4
Recommendations	47	19
TOTAL	240	100

It would appear, then that the urban municipalities are generally in favour of the regional planning angeices, recognizing the important roles performed and the essential services provided. However, it is also apparent from the number of comments expressing dissatisfaction, that the urban municipalities would also like to see more modifications made to the regional planning system in the Province, including the part played by the Provincial Government itself.

When the comments are examined from region to region some interesting differences occur, suggesting that the regional planning experience is viewed more positively in some regions than in others.

Figure 4 DISTRIBUTION OF COMMENTS BY REGION (SUMMARIZED BY CATEGORY)

	Advantages & Benefits		Disadvantages & Shortcomings		Operating Conditions		Recommendations		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Peace River	11	27	19	46	0	0	11	27	41	100
Edmonton	10	23	20	47	0	0	13	30	43	100
Battle River	11	50	7	32	0	0	4	18	22	100
Red Deer	15	60	6	24	0	0	4	8	25	100
Palliser	4	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	100
Calgary	22	47	18	38	1	2	6	13	47	100
Oldman River	19	79	2	8	0	0	3	13	24	100
Southeast Alberta	7	58	5	42	0	0	0	0	12	100
DMA	4	13	3	13	8	35	8	35	23	100
TOTAL	107	45	77	32	9	4	47	19	240	100

For example, of the 41 comments made by the AUMA members in the Peace River RPC, 46 percent were "Disadvantages & Shortcomings" and 27 percent were "Advantages & Benefits". This compares to a response in Oldman River RPC in which 79 percent of the 24 comments were "Advantages & Benefits" and only 8 percent "Disadvantages & Shortcomings".

A summary of comments on a regional basis follows, drawing upon the detailed tables appearing in the Appendix.

3.3 Regional Findings

3.3.1 Peace River RPC

- a well above average response rate
- there is general recognition that the RPC is doing a good job, but with some serious limitations
- the major complaint is that the geographical area of this region is too large which contributes to several other problems including:
  a) members lack information about the issues and problems in other communities
  b) the RPC is slow in responding to municipal needs
- two major recommendations suggest a need for boundary changes to reduce the size of the region, and that the RPC should be primarily a subdivision approval authority.

3.3.2 Edmonton RPC

- a lower than average response rate
- there was little agreement as to the "Advantages" of the ERPC although it was recognized that it encourages organized regional development
- the overwhelming complaint is that the RPC is too dictatorial resulting in a loss of local autonomy
- two other common complaints were that the RPC is slow in responding to municipal needs and that there is a rural and small town membership bias
- some common recommendations suggest that the RPC should play a more advisory role; the roles of the RPC should be clarified; and that there is a need for a change in membership representation.

3.3.3 Battle River RPC

- an average response rate
- there is general agreement that the RPC is doing a good job, although one municipality expressed great dissatisfaction and a desire to withdraw its membership from the RPC
- the most common complaint was that the RPC was too dictatorial resulting in a loss of local autonomy.

3.3.4 Red Deer RPC

- slightly above average response rate
- strong agreement that the RPC is doing a good job
- no concerted agreement as to the shortcomings of the RPC; however, some interesting concerns include:
  a) no coordination of planning activities with bordering regions
  b) too much time and money spent on meetings
  c) a feeling of powerlessness to stop the subdivision of good agricultural land
- a couple of recommendations were made dealing with the need to develop a better information network in the region.

3.3.5 Palliser RPC

- a lower than average response rate
- while only 4 comments were made, they were all in favour of the RPC.

3.3.6 Calgary RPC

- above average response rate
- general agreement that the RPC is doing a good job
- the most common complaint is that the RPC is too dictatorial resulting in a loss of local autonomy

- several other common complaints include:
  a) confusion resulting from staff errors in legal procedures
  b) too much provincial interference in regional affairs
  c) too much detail required for the regional plan
- the most common recommendation is that the RPC should play a more advisory role.

3.3.7 Oldman River RPC

- above average response rate
- overwhelming agreement that the RPC is doing a good job
- the only complaint stems from a perceived lack of commission staff to handle municipal needs.

3.3.8 Southeast Alberta RPC

- a well above average response rate
- general agreement that the RPC is doing a good job
- the major complaint was that the RPC is slow in responding to municipal needs.

3.3.9 Non RPC Region (i.e. under jurisdiction of DMA & NE Alberta Regional Commission)

- a well above average response rate
- since municipalities in the DMA region do not belong to a RPC more emphasis was placed on Operating Conditions including comments such as:
  a) receiving good service from DMA
  b) isolated, therefore no need for an RPC
- one city is experiencing growth pressures and expressed the realization that RPCs would make planning expertise more available
- the concerns about RPCs is that they have a reputation of being slow to respond to municipal needs
- generally, there is satisfaction with the present planning arrangement and no desire to join or form a RPC, although several municipalities requested more information about RPCs.

4. SUMMARY OF AAMD&C MEMBERS' RESPONSES

4.1 Response Rate

The AAMD&C poll resulted in a response by 17 rural municipalities, representing 35 percent of all the counties and municipal districts in the Province. The response rate excluding rural municipalities who are not members of an RPC is 44 percent, which is substantially higher than the overall response rate of 35 percent. It should be noted that Special Areas and Improvement Districts are not included in the AAMD&D membership and are thus not included in this report.

When responses are broken down into those from counties and those from municipal districts, it will be seen that the greatest proportional response and the greatest numerical contribution came from the counties.

Figure 5 RESPONSES TO AAMD&C QUESTIONNAIRE

Status	Number of Responses	% of Rural Municipalities	% Total Responses
Counties	14	47	82
Municipal Districts	3	17	18
TOTAL	17	35	100

It is interesting to note that the counties have more comments in their responses, averaging about 4 each, compared with an average of about 2 for the municipal districts.

4.2 Overall Findings

The 17 responding rural municipalities contributed a total of some 61 comments, covering 19 subject areas.

Figure 6 COMMENTS OF AAMD&C RESPONDENTS

Subject	Number of Comments
Advantages & Beneftis	
1 Doing a good job	3
2 Availability of planning expertise	3
3 Encourages organized regional development	3
4 Regional perspective to municipal planning	0
5 Forum for conflict resolution	0
6 Essential to small municipalities	0
Disadvantages & Shortcomings	
1 Urban membership bias	8
2 Too dictatorial - loss of local autonomy	8
3 Members lack information about others' issues & areas	4
4 Geographical area too large	3
5 Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective	3
6 Slow to respond	2
7 Errors in legal procedures	1
8 RPC is a source of conflict	1
9 Rural & small town membership bias	0
10 Too much provincial interference	0
11 Overlapping functions & loyalties	0
12 Inequities in provincial municipal funding	0
Disadvantages & Shortcomings (continued)	
13 APB hearings too complex	0
14 RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff	0
15 Too many committees & meetings	0
16 No coordination with Bordering Regions	0
17 Interpersonal management problems	0
Operating Conditions	
1 Growth pressures	2
2 Good service from DMA/APB	1
3 Isolated - no need for RPC	0
4 Importance of leadership in RPC operations	0
Recommendations	
1 S.A.A.*to local municipal governments	5
2 Should be more advisory	4
3 Clarify RPC roles	4
4 Need for change in membership	3
5 Clarify provincial role	2
6 Need for boundary changes	1
7 Should be primarily S.A.A.*	0
8 Need for local RPC offices	0
9 Need for Alberta-trained planners	0
10 Do not wish membership in RPCs	0
11 Need for more information about/by RPCs	0
12 Need orientation for new members	0
TOTAL	*61*

*S.A.A. refers to Subdivision Approval Authority

A closer look at Figure 6 shows that the relatively few comments categorized under "Advantages & Benefits" are evenly split between "doing a good job", "availability of planning expertise", and "encourages organized regional development".

Of the many comments under "Disadvantages & Shortcomings", the two most common complaints are that there is an "urban membership bias" and a "loss of local autonomy".

The three most common "Recommendations" suggest that subdivision approval authority and land use policy be given to local municipal governments, that there is a need to clarify RPC roles, and that the RPCs should play a more advisory role.

Comparing a summary of comments in each category (Figure 7), we see that of the 61 comments, 9 comments (15 percent) were categorized as "Advantages & Benefits"; 30 comments or (49 percent) were categorized as "Disadvantages & Shortcomings"; while 19 comments or (31 percent) were categorized as "Recommendations".

Figure 7 SUMMARY OF AAMD&C COMMENTS

Subject Category	Number of Comments	% AAMD&C Comments
Advantages & Benefits	9	15
Disadvantages & Shortcomings	30	49
Operating Conditions	3	5
Recommendations	19	31
TOTAL	61	100

In the "Recommendations" category, 2 comments were directed at the Provincial role in regional planning.

It would appear, then, that while the rural municipalities recognize some need for regional planning, the greatest number of comments express dissatisfaction with the present operations of the RPCs.

When the comments are examined from region to region, there are some differences. However, it is apparent that the regional planning experience is generally viewed with dissatisfaction in most regions.

Figure 8 DISTRIBUTION OF COMMENTS BY REGION (SUMMARIZED BY CATEGORY)

	Advantages & Benefits		Disadvantages & Shortcomings		Operating Conditions		Recommendations		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Peace River	0	0	3	100	0	0	0	0	3	100
Edmonton	3	14	7	32	2	9	10	45	22	100
Battle River	3	37.5	4	50	0	0	1	12.5	8	100
Red Deer	0	0	5	62.5	0	0	3	37.5	8	100
Palliser	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Calgary	1	14	4	57	0	0	2	29	7	100
Oldman River	2	28.5	3	43	0	0	2	28.5	7	100
Southeast Alberta	0	0	2	67	0	0	1	33	3	100
DMA	0	0	2	67	1	33	0	0	3	100
TOTAL	9	15	30	49	3	5	19	31	61	100

For example, AAMD&C members responded with a greater number of "Disadvantages & Shortcomings" than "Advantages & Benefits" in every region.

A summary of comments on a regional basis follows, drawing upon the detailed tables appearing in the Appendix.

4.3 Regional Findings

4.3.1 Peace River RPC

- a below average response rate
- dissatisfaction stems from a strong urban membership bias which allows the urban municipalities to dictate regional policy matters
- the regional plan is too restrictive for rural areas.

4.3.2 Edmonton RPC

- a 100 percent response rate
- given the growth pressure in the region there was recognition of a need for regional planning
- dissatisfaction stems from the fact that the regional plan is perceived as a control document reducing local autonomy, and since the RPC is too urban oriented, rural municipalities receive little assistance and have little local subdivision control
- it is therefore recommended that there is a need to clarify RPC roles including the transferring of subdivision approval authority to local municipalities.

4.3.3 Battle River RPC

- a well above average response rate
- there was general agreement that this RPC is doing a good job of providing a broad range of service
- however, dissatisfaction was expressed with the urban memebership bias and with inconsistencies in the application of general policies
- it was felt that the large number of members make the decision process unwieldy.

4.3.4 Red Deer RPC

- an above average response rate
- dissatisfaction stems from an urban membership bias as reflected in the voting structure, and as well, since the region is too large, members tend to be ill-informed about other local issues
- it is recommended that greater effort in rural matters is needed by reducing the size of the region and by regionalizing the Alberta Planning Board.

4.3.5 Palliser RPC

- no rural responses to the questionnaire were received.

4.3.6 Calgary RPC

- a well above average response rate
- there was some recognition of a need for regional planning
- dissatisfaction stems from an urban membership bias which virtually eliminates the approval of rural proposals, and from a RPC which is too restrictive from the viewpoint of rural members
- a change in membership representation is recommended.

4.3.7 Oldman River RPC

- a well below average response rate
- there is acknowledgement that relations with the RPC are fairly good and that there is a need for good regional planning
- there is dissatisfaction with central policies being forced on all municipalities regardless of local conditions
- it is recommended that land use policies are best implemented and controlled at the local level.

4.3.8 Southeast Alberta RPC

- a well above average response rate
- a feeling that the RPC is too restrictive with regard to subdivisions and that it is unsympathetic to the need and requests of local Councils
- it is recommended that the RPC play a more advisory role.

4.3.9 Non RPC Region (ie. under jurisdiction of DMA & NE Alberta Regional Commission

- a well above average reponse rate
- there was satisfaction with the services from DMA
- the disadvantages of belonging to an RPC were expressed with the perception that they tend to be urban-oriented and that the regions are too large.

5. COMPARISON OF URBAN AND RURAL FINDINGS

5.1 Response Rate

The response rate by AAMD&C members was greater than the response rate by the AUMA members.

5.2 General Findings

The most striking finding in Figure 9 is that the majority of urban comments are distributed between the "Advantages" and "Disadvantages" categories with the greatest percentage of comments falling into the "Advantages" section. By comparison, the rural comments are distributed between the "Disadvantages" and "Recommendations" categories with the greatest percentage of comments being classified as "Disadvantages".

Figure 9 COMPARISON OF URBAN-RURAL COMMENTS

Major Issues	% of Total Urban Responses	% of Total Rural Responses
Advantages & Benefits	45	15
Disadvantages & Shortcomings	32	49
Operating Conditions	4	5
Recommendations	19	31
TOTAL	100	100

Thus, the rural municipalities have made substantially fewer positive comments, while finding more disadvantages and making more recommendations for change than the urban municipalities.

The following table (Figure 10) provides a breakdown of this apparent rural-urban split by highlighting a comparison of selected statements made by the AUMA and AAMD&C members. For example, in the "Advantages" section, while urban municipalities made a greater percentage of remarks referring to the "good job" the RPCs were performing and to the "availability of planning expertise", both urban and rural municipalities commented approximately equally on the need for regional planning with the statement "it encourages organized regional development".

Figure 10 A SELECTIVE COMPARISION OF URBAN-RURAL COMMENTS

Issue	% of Total Urban Responses	% of Total Rural Responses
Doing a Good Job	19	5
Availability of Planning Expertise	13	5
Encourages Organized Regional Development	6	5
Slow to Respond	8	3
Rural & Small Town Membership Bias	3	0
Urban Membership Bias	1	13
Too Dictatorial-Loss of Local Autonomy	9	13
Members Lack Information about Others's Issues	2	7
Should be More Advisory	5	7
RPC Should be Primarily S.A.A.	3	0
S.A.A. to Local Governments	1	8
Clarify RPC Roles	1	7
Need for Change in Membership	1	5

In the "Disadvantages" section, urban municipalities placed a greater emphasis on the RPCs' "slowness" in responding to municipal proposals and on the "rural and small town membership bias". By comparison, the rural municipalities placed an even stronger emphasis on the apparent "urban domination" over the RPCs and on the lack of familiarity of RPC members with rural needs.

Both urban and rural municipalities stressed that the RPCs are "too dictatorial" resulting in a "loss of local autonomy", although rural municipalities emphasized this point with a slightly higher percentage of comments.

A further aspect of the rural-urban split can be observed by comparing urban and rural comments on a regional basis as found in Figure 11.

Figure 11 COMPARISON OF COMMENTS BY REGION

	%	Advantages & Benefits	Disadvantages & Shortcomings	Operating Conditions	Recommendations
Peace River	Urban	27	46	0	27
	Rural	0	100	0	0
Edmonton	Urban	23	47	0	30
	Rural	14	32	9	45
Battle River	Urban	50	32	0	18
	Rural	37.5	50	0	12.5
Red Deer	Urban	60	24	0	16
	Rural	0	62.5	0	37.5
Palliser	Urban	100	0	0	0
	Rural	0	0	0	0
Calgary	Urban	47	38	2	13
	Rural	14	57	0	29
Oldman River	Urban	79	8	0	13
	Rural	28.5	43	0	28.5
Southeast Alberta	Urban	58	42	0	0
	Rural	0	67	0	33
DMA	Urban	17	13	35	35
	Rural	0	67	33	0

In every region, urban municipalities made a substantially greater percentage of positive comments than the rural municipalities, while in every region except one, rural municipalities made a greater percentage of negative comments. (Rural municipalities also generally made a greater percentage of recommendations than did the urban municipalities).

6. SUMMARY

A comparison of the responses from the two associations points up some shared concerns as well as a significant difference of opinion in many areas. Whatever the view -- positive or negative -- the following concerns would appear to be fruitful areas for discussion, investigation and action.

6.1 Representation on the RPCs and the voting pattern of rural and urban members was a source of contention by both. There is a perceived urban domination in the eyes of the rural municipalities, and a small town-rural bias in the eyes of the larger urban municipalities.

6.2 A loss of local autonomy was felt by both urban and rural respondents.

6.3 Regional plans and subdivision policies were felt to be somewhat restrictive, and there was the feeling that the RPCs should be more advisory.

6.4 The boundary question and size of the RPCs (some of them, at least) was a concern.

6.5 The level of services, and the speed with which they are provided by the RPCs, was a matter of concern, with support being voiced for more and faster advisory services from the Commissions.

6.6 A further definition of the nature of the Provincial role in the regions was a concern of several respondents who felt that,on occasion, the interventions were not appropriate. It was not clear whether this reflected on the Alberta Planning Board or the departments.

APPENDIX A

DETAILED RESPONSES FROM URBAN MUNICIPALITIES

Table A.1 RESPONSE RATE FOR PEACE RIVER RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	0	1	0
Town	4	13	31
Village	3	9	33
S. Village	0	0	-
TOTAL	7	23	30

TOWNS: There is generally a positive attitude towards the RPC and the functions it performs; notably, the expertise of the planning staff and its assistance in providing planning services.

As for recommendations, there was almost unanimous agreement that the geographical area of the region was too large. By reducing its size, planners would be able to spend more time working with local jurisdictions, thus paying more attention to the diversity of needs within the region.

Rapidly changing provincial legislation was seen by one town as making the job of the Commission very difficult to perform.

VILLAGES: The reaction of the villages to the Commission is somewhat mixed, acknowledging that it is doing a reasonably good job, but also recognizing some serious shortcomings.

Advantages:
1) uniformity in planning process allowing regional development in an orderly fashion
2) a source of planning expertise, particularly for smaller municipalities.

Shortcomings:
1) the Commission area is too large
2) the Commission is inadequately funded compared to other Commissions
3) few Commission members feel competent to make regional planning policies, especially if the views of the "expert" staff are contrary to those held by the members

Peace River (continued)

4) a large percentage of the professional planners are from the East, and hence have no particular feel for the North
5) the Commission becomes too involved in strictly local planning matters with the effect of eroding local authority.

Recommendations:
1) the Commissions should revert to the role of subdivision planning and approval, and should provide assistance to municipalities in developing their own General Plan, in more of an advisory capacity
2) while the expertise of the Commission staff should continue to be made available to local municipalities, the Municipal Council should be given more control over local planning matters
3) regional plans should not be so restrictive as to cause endless Regional Plan amendment requests each time a municipality wants to develop something
4) hearing procedures should be revised so as to allow more input and ideas from the public
5) administrators should be allowed as members of the Commission,since it is they who have a better understanding of the legislation.

COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, PEACE RIVER RPC

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages/ S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					11
Doing a good job		2	3	5	
Regional perspective to municipal planning					
Forum for conflict resolution					
Availability of planning expertise		2	2	4	
Encourage organized regional development		1	1	2	
Essential to small municipalities					
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					19
Slow to respond			2	2	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias		1		1	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective			1	1	
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy			2	2	
Too much provincial interference		2		2	
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large		3	2	5	
Members lack information about others' issues and areas		1	2	3	
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding			1	1	
APB hearings too complex			1	1	
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff		1		1	
Too many committees and meetings					
No coordination with bordering regions					
A source of friction					
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					Ø
Growth pressures					
Isolated-no need for RPC					
Good service from DMA/APB					
Commission leadership					
Recommendations					11
Should be more advisory			1	1	
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments		1	2	3	
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role					
Need for boundary changes		3	2	5	
Need for local RPC offices		1		1	
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC					
Need more information about/by RPCs					
Need for change in membership representation					
Need orientation for new members					
TOTAL	Ø	18	23	41	41

Table A.3 RESPONSE RATE FOR EDMONTON RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	2	2	100
Town	5	13	38
Village	1	9	11
S. Village	0	22	0
TOTAL	8	46	17

CITY: Neither of the two cities were very pleased with the operations of the RPC, and both would prefer to see changes made. In one case, it was felt that the RPC should play a regional coordinative and regulatory role, leaving internal planning affairs to local municipalities.

In the other response, the major complaints include:
a) under representation on the RPC
b) the RPC plays too restrictive a role within the city limits
c) poor management of lands adjacent to the city.

TOWN: There is general recognition of the need for a planning body to oversee regional planning needs.

However, some of the common complaints include:
a) the subdivision approval process takes too long
b) an attempt by one of the cities to dominate Commission meetings reduces the ability to maintain a cooperative atmosphere
c) the Commission overrides local authority by attempting to apply region-wide policies which do not work in all jurisdictions
d) the Commission is too restrictive over local land use policy.

Edmonton (continued)

Recommendations include:
a) allow small subdivision applications to be approved by the local municipality
b) planning staff should be more considerate of local municipality development policies
c) there should be a clearer definition of RPC roles and services
d) better education and information programs should be developed by the RPC.

VILLAGE: The one respondent was very pleased with the services and function of the RPC. Their only concern was that the RPC tends to be too restrictive in applying regional policy to small municipalities.

Table A.4 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, EDMONTON RPC

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages/ S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					10
Doing a good job		1	1	2	
Regional perspective to municipal planning		1		1	
Forum for conflict resolution		1		1	
Availability of planning expertise					
Encourage organized regional development	2	2	2	6	
Essential to small municipalities					
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					20
Slow to respond		4		4	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	2	2		4	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective					
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	3	6	2	11	
Too much provincial interference					
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large					
Members lack information about others' issues and areas					
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding					
APB hearings too complex					
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff					
Too many committees and meetings					
No coordination with bordering regions					
A source of friction		1		1	
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					Ø
Growth pressures					
Isolated-no need for RPC					
Good service from DMA/APB					
Commission leadership					
Recommendations					13
Should be more advisory	3	2		5	
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments		1		1	
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role	2	1		3	
Need for boundary changes					
Need for local RPC offices					
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC					
Need more information about/by RPCs		1		1	
Need for change in membership representation	1	1		2	
Need orientation for new members		1		1	
TOTAL	13	25	5	43	43

Table A.5 RESPONSE RATE FOR BATTLE RIVER RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	2	2	100
Town	3	7	43
Village	1	14	7
S. Village	0	6	0
TOTAL	6	29	21

CITIES: There is agreement that the Commission has carried out its duties in an excellent manner in organizing the various communities to adopt a regional plan.

Two reservations: 1) members from outside the municipality could veto a subdivision which was acceptable to the local Council 2) with a need for quick subdivision and development decisions subdivision approvals should be the prerogative of a local municipal government.

TOWNS: Two of the towns felt that their Commission was doing an excellent job, providing prompt service at a low cost, and of a high calibre.

One town expressed great dissatisfaction with the Commission in great detail. The following is a brief outline of this town's complaints and recommendations.

Complaints:
1) The town Council has been overruled on at least five occasions by the Planning Commission.
2) the present Commission authority robs the local Council of making effective planning decisions.
3) The growth of small towns has been seriously affected by Commission delays and requirements, adding thousands of dollars to development costs.

Recommendations:
1) The present Commission should be altered in the following ways:
   a) the Commission should adopt the attitude of assisting, not dictating, to town Councils;

Battle River (continued)

b) the Commission should allow more decisions to be made by Local Governments; and
c) the present system of sending representatives from various towns and villages to the Commission once a month to vote on subdivisions and other planning proposals that they have never seen (until the meeting), should be ended.

VILLAGES: The one responding village rates the Commission highly, complimenting it on providing planning services whenever needed.

Table A.6 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, BATTLE RIVER RPC

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					11
Doing a good job	2	4	1	7	
Regional perspective to municipal planning					
Forum for conflict resolution					
Availability of planning expertise		1		1	
Encourage organized regional development	1		1	2	
Essential to small municipalities	1			1	
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					7
Slow to respond	1			1	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias					
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective					
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	1	3		4	
Too much provincial interference					
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large					
Members lack information about others' issues and areas		1		1	
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding					
APB hearings too complex					
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff					
Too many committees and meetings		1		1	
No coordination with bordering regions					
A source of friction					
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					Ø
Growth pressures					
Isolated-no need for RPC					
Good service from DMA/APB					
Commission leadership					
Recommendations					4
Should be more advisory		1		1	
Should be primarily S.A.A.	1			1	
- S.A.A. to local municipal governments	1			1	
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role					
Need for boundary changes					
Need for local RPC offices					
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC		1		1	
Need more information about/by RPCs					
Need for change in membership representation					
Need orientation for new members					
TOTAL	8	12	2	22	22

Table A.7 RESPONSE RATE FOR RED DEER RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	0	1	0
Town	3	14	21
Village	4	14	29
S. Village	1	6	17
TOTAL	8	35	23

TOWNS: The towns all agreed that their Commission was performing well.

Positive comments include:

1) the Commission authority for subdivision approval was a practical function
2) aid in preparing general plans and land use bylaws for local municipalities was valuable
3) the broader scope of regional plans helps to coordinate interdependent functions of adjacent municipalities
4) although subdivision applications sometimes experience frustrating delays, one town felt that it was better to have a decision backed by sound advice and considered opinion rather than to find a snap decision which has been ill-considered
5) a commission can formulate policy recommendations objectively, free from local political pressures
6) while friction can develop between urban and rural municipalities within a Commission as a result of attempting to resolve conflicting interests, it was felt that the Commission was beneficial by providing a forum to discuss and perhaps resolve these conflicts.

Problems:

1) it was felt that manpower constraints limit the capacity of the Commission to fulfil its responsibilities within a reasonable time period
2) another town felt that too much time and money was spent on meetings. They recommended full

Red Deer (Continued)

Commission meetings 3-4 times per year, with Committee meetings on a monthly basis to discuss and vote on motions. The results of these Committee meetings could be reported in a newsletter.

VILLAGES: One village had no comment. Two of the villages felt that the Commission was performing well, although one village suggested that this was because of the concern demonstrated by the planner assigned to work with their municipality.

On the other hand, it was noted that this region does not encompass municipalities with similar problems. Hence, there is no machinery set-up to coordinate planning activities with bordering regions. One village felt powerless to stop the subdivision of good agricultural land into non-viable forms. The same village complained that regional decisions were often overruled by the Planning Board.

One village recommended that the region be further subdivided for more local influence.

SUMMER VILLAGE: The one summer village that responded was very pleased with the present Commission.

Table A.8 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, RED DEER RPC

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					15
Doing a good job		4	4	8	
Regional perspective to municipal planning			1	1	
Forum for conflict resolution		3		3	
Availability of planning expertise		2		2	
Encourage organized regional development			1	1	
Essential to small municipalities					
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					6
Slow to respond		1		1	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias			1	1	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective					
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy					
Too much provincial interference			1	1	
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large					
Members lack information about others' issues and areas					
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding					
APB hearings too complex					
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff					
Too many committees and meetings		1		1	
No coordination with bordering regions			1	1	
A source of friction		1		1	
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					Ø
Growth pressures					
Isolated-no need for RPC					
Good service from DMA/APB					
Commission leadership					
Recommendations					4
Should be more advisory					
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments					
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role					
Need for boundary changes			1	1	
Need for local RPC offices			1	1	
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC					
Need more information about/by RPCs		1	1	2	
Need for change in membership representation					
Need orientation for new members					
TOTAL	Ø	13	12	25	25

Table A.9 RESPONSE RATE FOR PALLISER RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	0	1	0
Town	1	2	50
Village	1	8	12
S. Village	0	0	-
TOTAL	2	11	18

Both responses were positive in that they expressed satisfaction with their RPC.

The town specifically commented that it was receiving a greater amount of service of a better quality, and in less time, than with the previous arrangement (viz. services provided through the Calgary Regional Planning Commission).

Table A.10 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, PALLISER RPC

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					4
Doing a good job		2	1	3	
Regional perspective to municipal planning					
Forum for conflict resolution					
Availability of planning expertise					
Encourage organized regional development					
Essential to small municipalities		1		1	
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					Ø
Slow to respond					
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias					
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective					
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy					
Too much provincial interference					
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large					
Members lack information about others' issues and areas					
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding					
APB hearings too complex					
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff					
Too many committees and meetings					
No coordination with bordering regions					
A source of friction					
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					Ø
Growth pressures					
Isolated-no need for RPC					
Good service from DMA/APB					
Commission leadership					
Recommendations					Ø
Should be more advisory					
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments					
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role					
Need for boundary changes					
Need for local RPC offices					
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC					
Need more information about/by RPCs					
Need for change in membership representation					
Need orientation for new members					
TOTAL	Ø	3	1	4	4

Table A.11 RESPONSE RATE FOR CALGARY RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
Cities & Towns*	5	13	38
Villages	3	13	23
S. Villages	0	2	0
TOTAL	8	28	29

CITIES & TOWNS

There is general agreement that the RPC is doing as good a job as can be expected given the context of dealing with both urban and rural environments. On the one hand, the Commission provides professional input and service that would be beyond the ability of many urban municipalities to contract for on their own, while at the same time, the Commission has been unable to respond rapidly to pressing urban problems.

Advantages:

1) encourages member municipalities to maintain a regional perspective and to make them aware of the inter-municipal implications of their local planning
2) it provides a forum for discussion and resolution of inter-municipal conflicts
3) the provision of a pool of professional expertise
4) the Commission is generally able to perserve the integrity of the lands surrounding the City for the orderly expansion of urban land.

Disadvantages & Shortcomings:

1) the Commission takes a reactive stance and seems unwilling to plan for the long-term
2) the regional plan is geared to dealing with shorter term local issues than with broader regional-scale issues. For example, information required by the RPC to support a regional plan amendment is more in line with information required at the general municipal plan or area structure plan level
3) two-tier planning results in an overlapping of functions and loyalties between the regional and municipal levels

*The tabulations of responses from cities and towns have been merged in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

Calgary (continued)

4) problems have arisen as a result of the Province changing the rules so often and overruling Commission decisions
5) some of the motions covering development should be more explicit as to details of condition
6) two of the respondents commented that on many occasions the Commission attempts to be too forceful or dictatory rather than acting in an advisory capacity. However, one respondent commented that it did not find the Commission to be overpowering in establishing planning policies.

VILLAGES: Two of the villages felt that the Commission was doing an excellent job in providing expert planning services and advice.

Advantages:
1) the availability of professional trained personnel
2) allowing the municipality a voice in the development of the region

Disadvantages:
1) too dictatorial resulting in a loss of local autonomy
2) confusion resulting from errors in procedure
3) time delays in getting work completed.

Table A.12 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES
CALGARY RPC

Major Issues	Cities & Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				22
Doing a good job	3	2	5	
Regional perspective to municipal planning	1	1	2	
Forum for conflict resolution	1		1	
Availability of planning expertise	11	2	13	
Encourage organized regional development	1		1	
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				18
Slow to respond	1	1	2	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	2		2	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective	2		2	
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	2	2	4	
Too much provincial interference	3		3	
Overlapping functions and loyalties	2		2	
Errors in legal procedures	2	1	3	
Geographical area too large				
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				1
Growth pressures	1		1	
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				6
Should be more advisory	2	2	4	
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role	1		1	
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs	1		1	
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	36	11	47	47

Table A.13 RESPONSE RATE FOR OLDMAN RIVER RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	0	1	0
Towns	7	16	44
Villages	2	16	12
S. Villages	0	0	-
TOTAL	9	33	27

TOWNS: All the towns were in agreement that the RPC is doing a fine job by providing:
1) valuable planning expertise
2) encouraging organized regional development
3) by providing a forum for conflict resolution

The major complaint seems to stem from a lack of Commission staff to handle municipal needs.

VILLAGES: Both villages were very happy with the service received from their commission.

Table A.14 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, OLDMAN RIVER RPC

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					19
Doing a good job		7	2	9	
Regional perspective to municipal planning		1		1	
Forum for conflict resolution		1		1	
Availability of planning expertise		5	1	6	
Encourage organized regional development		2		2	
Essential to small municipalities					
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					2
Slow to respond		2		2	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias					
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective					
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy					
Too much provincial interference					
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large					
Members lack information about others' issues and areas					
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding					
APB hearings too complex					
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff					
Too many committees and meetings					
No coordination with bordering regions					
A source of friction					
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					Ø
Growth pressures					
Isolated-no need for RPC					
Good service from DMA/APB					
Commission leadership					
Recommendations					3
Should be more advisory		1		1	
Should be primarily S.A.A.		2		2	
- S.A.A. to local municipal governments					
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role					
Need for boundary changes					
Need for local RPC offices					
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC					
Need more information about/by RPCs					
Need for change in membership representation					
Need orientation for new members					
TOTAL	Ø	21	3	24	24

Table A.15 RESPONSE RATE FOR SOUTHEAST ALBERTA RPC, URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
Cities & Towns*	4	6	67
Villages	0	6	0
S. Villages	0	0	0
TOTAL	4	12	33

CITIES & TOWNS:

There is a general feeling that the RPC is doing a fairly good job of providing services and technical expertise

Advantages:
1) the provision of technical expertise
2) one respondent commented that it felt that its yearly assessment was well spent

Disadvantages & Shortcomings:
1) some interpersonal differences at the management level have temporarily detracted from the RPC operations
2) a lack of Commission staff to provide the required services within a preferred period of time
3) smaller municipalities have the power to override the approval of policies or needs of the larger municipalities.

*The tabulations of responses from cities and towns have been merged in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

Major Issues	Cities & Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				7
Doing a good job	3		3	
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise	2		2	
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities	2		2	
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				5
Slow to respond	3		3	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	1		1	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective				
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy				
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures				
Geographical area too large				
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems	1		1	
Operating Conditions				Ø
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				Ø
Should be more advisory				
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role				
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	12	Ø	12	12

Table A.17 RESPONSE RATE FOR MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS REGION URBAN MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Number	Percentage
City	2	2	100
Town	1	27	4
Village	4	36	11
S. Village	0	3	0
TOTAL	7	68	10

CITIES: One of the cities expressed an interest in talking to the APB to find out more about the RPCs.

The pressures faced by this city which create a need for regional planning include:
a) rapid growth
b) annexations
c) peripheral industrial & country residential development
d) resource development & pipeline easements.

While it was felt that an RPC would provide planning expertise from a vicinity closer than Edmonton, and that the standard of planning could not help but be raised, there were some reservations stemming from the RPC's reputation for delays and red tape.

The other city expressed definite opposition to joining an RPC at this time. It felt it was too isolated to gain any benefit from joining a Commission. In fact, at the time of writing, this city was considering forming its own Municipal Planning Commission.

TOWN: The town also expressed opposition to joining an RPC. It expressed the opinion that the Director of RPC determines to a large degree the success or failure of its operations. The town was also satisfied with the expertise provided by the Department of Municipal Affairs.

VILLAGES: The villages were basically satisfied with the present situation and expressed no interest in joining an RPC. Two villages did admit to knowing little about RPCs and requested more information about them.

Table A.18 COMMENTS OF URBAN MUNICIPALITIES, DMA REGION

Major Issues	Cities	Towns	Villages S.Villages	Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits					4
Doing a good job		1		1	
Regional perspective to municipal planning					
Forum for conflict resolution					
Availability of planning expertise	3			3	
Encourage organized regional development					
Essential to small municipalities					
Disadvantages & Shortcomings					3
Slow to respond	3			3	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias					
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective					
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy					
Too much provincial interference					
Overlapping functions and loyalties					
Errors in legal procedures					
Geographical area too large					
Members lack information about others' issues and areas					
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding					
APB hearings too complex					
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff					
Too many committees and meetings					
No coordination with bordering regions					
A source of friction					
Interpersonal management problems					
Operating Conditions					8
Growth pressures	2			2	
Isolated-no need for RPC	1	1		2	
Good service from DMA/APB		1	2	3	
Commission leadership		1		1	
Recommendations					8
Should be more advisory					
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments					
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role					
Need for boundary changes					
Need for local RPC offices					
Need for Alberta-trained planners					
Do not wish membership in RPC	1	1	2	4	
Need more information about/by RPCs	2		2	4	
Need for change in membership representation					
Need orientation for new members					
TOTAL	12	5	6	23	23

APPENDIX B

DETAILED RESPONSES FROM RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

Table B.1 RESPONSE RATE FOR PEACE RIVER RPC, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
County	0	1	0
Municipal District	1	4	25
TOTAL	1	5	20

M.D.:

The M.D. felt that there was a strong urban membership bias in their RPC which allowed urban municipalities to dictate policy matters.

The Regional Plan is too restrictive for rural areas, it was felt.

Recommendation:
a) Regional councils should be given more authority to make local policy.

Table B.2 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES, PEACE RIVER RPC

Major Issues	County	Municipal District	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				Ø
Doing a good job				
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise				
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				3
Slow to respond				
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	1		1	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective	1		1	
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	1		1	
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures				
Geographical area too large				
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				Ø
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				Ø
Should be more advisory				
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role				
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	3	Ø	3	3

Table B.3 RESPONSE RATE FOR EDMONTON RPC, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
Counties & Municipal Districts*	5	5	100

COUNTIES & MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS:

There is general dissatisfaction with the operations of the RPC.

Disadvantages & Shortcomings:

1) the regional plan is a control document rather than one which plans for the future
2) the regional plan is an instrument for rural-urban conflict
3) rural municipalities have little or no control over subdivision within their boundaries
4) the RPC is too urban oriented
5) members lack information and interest about other municipalities
6) the subdivision approval process is unnecessarily prolonged
7) rural municipalities receive little assistance.

Recommendations:

1) Subdivision approval authority should be transferred to local municipalities
2) a need to clarify RPC jurisdiction
3) RPC should be more advisory
4) a need to establish a rural commission.

*The tabulations of responses from counties and municipal districts have been merged in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

Table B.4 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES, EDMONTON RPC

Major Issues	Counties and Municipal Districts	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits			3
Doing a good job			
Regional perspective to municipal planning			
Forum for conflict resolution			
Availability of planning expertise	1	1	
Encourage organized regional development	2	2	
Essential to small municipalities			
Disadvantages & Shortcomings			8
Slow to respond	2	2	
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	1	1	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective			
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	3	3	
Too much provincial interference			
Overlapping functions and loyalties			
Errors in legal procedures			
Geographical area too large			
Members lack information about others' issues and areas	1	1	
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding			
APB hearings too complex			
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff			
Too many committees and meetings			
No coordination with bordering regions			
A source of friction	1	1	
Interpersonal management problems			
Operating Conditions			2
Growth pressures	2	2	
Isolated-no need for RPC			
Good service from DMA/APB			
Commission leadership			
Recommendations			10
Should be more advisory	2	2	
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments	4	4	
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role	3	3	
Need for boundary changes			
Need for local RPC offices			
Need for Alberta-trained planners			
Do not wish membership in RPC			
Need more information about/by RPCs			
Need for change in membership representation	1	1	
Need orientation for new members			
TOTAL	23	23	23

Table B.5 RESPONSE RATE FOR BATTLE RIVER RPC, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
County	3	4	75
Municipal District	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	4	75

COUNTY: There was agreement among two of the counties that the RPC is doing a good job and is providing a broad range of services

There were some shortcomings as well, however, including:

a) inconsistency in the classification of agricultural land
b) inconsistency with general policies
c) urban membership bias
e) too many members making the decision process unwieldy
f) some loss of local autonomy.

Table B.6 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
BATTLE RIVER RPC

Major Issues	County	Municipal District	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				3
Doing a good job	2		2	
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise	1		1	
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				4
Slow to respond				
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	2		2	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective				
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	1		1	
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures				
Geographical area too large	1		1	
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				Ø
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				1
Should be more advisory				
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role	1		1	
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	8	Ø	8	8

TABLE B.7 RESPONSE RATE FOR RED DEER RPC, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
County	2	5	40
Municipal District	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	5	40

COUNTY:

Problems with this RPC include:
a) rural-urban conflict reflected in the voting structure
b) the region is too large in area
c) members are uninformed and lack information about others' issues

Recommendations:
a) the APB should be regionalized and include members from the public
b) the regional area should be reduced in size
c) greater effort in rural matters is needed.

Table B.8 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
RED DEER RPC

Major Issues	County	Municipal District	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				Ø
Doing a good job				
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise				
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				5
Slow to respond				
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	2		2	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective				
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy				
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures				
Geographical area too large	1		1	
Members lack information about others' issues and areas	2		2	
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				Ø
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				3
Should be more advisory				
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role	1		1	
- clarify RPC role	1		1	
Need for boundary changes	1		1	
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	8	Ø	8	8

Table B.9 RESPONSE RATE FOR PALLISER RPC, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
County	0	0	0
Municipal District	0	2	0
TOTAL	0	2	0

Table B.10 RESPONSE RATE FOR CALGARY RPC
RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
Counties & Municipal Districts*	2	4	50
TOTAL	2	4	50

COUNTIES & MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS:

The need for regional planning is recognized. However, there is general dissatisfaction with the RPC.

Disadvantages & Shortcomings:
1) too much urban control over the Commission which virtually eliminates the approval of rural proposals
2) the RPC is too restrictive on rural members
3) a lack of information and understanding by members of others' issues.

Recommendations:
1) a need for change in membership representation.

*The tabulations of responses from counties and municipal districts have been merged in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
CALGARY RPC

Major Issues	Counties and Municipal Districts	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits			1
Doing a good job			
Regional perspective to municipal planning			
Forum for conflict resolution			
Availability of planning expertise			
Encourage organized regional development	1	1	
Essential to small municipalities			
Disadvantages & Shortcomings			4
Slow to respond			
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	2	2	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective	1	1	
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy			
Too much provincial interference			
Overlapping functions and loyalties			
Errors in legal procedures			
Geographical area too large			
Members lack information about others' issues and areas	1	1	
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding			
APB hearings too complex			
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff			
Too many committees and meetings			
No coordination with bordering regions			
A source of friction			
Interpersonal management problems			
Operating Conditions			Ø
Growth pressures			
Isolated-no need for RPC			
Good service from DMA/APB			
Commission leadership			
Recommendations			2
Should be more advisory			
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments			
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role			
Need for boundary changes			
Need for local RPC offices			
Need for Alberta-trained planners			
Do not wish membership in RPC			
Need more information about/by RPCs			
Need for change in membership representation	2	2	
Need orientation for new members			
TOTAL	7	7	7

Table B. 12 RESPONSE RATE FOR OLDMAN RIVER RPC
RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
County	1	3	33
Municipal District	0	4	0
TOTAL	1	7	14

COUNTY: This response is generally mixed. While it is recognized that there is a need for good regional planning, and it is acknowledged that relations with the RPC have been fairly good, there are a number of major problems.

Disadvantages & Shortcomings:
a) one policy should not apply to the variety of conditions which exist in a region
b) too much central authority
c) poor documentation of conditions by a few planners

Recommendations:
a) Commission staff should spend more time with Municipal Councils
b) land use policies are best implemented and controlled at the local level.

Table B. 13 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
OLDMAN RIVER RPC

Major Issues	County	Municipal District	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				2
Doing a good job	1		1	
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise	1		1	
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				3
Slow to respond				
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias				
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective				
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	2		2	
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures	1		1	
Geographical area too large				
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				Ø
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				2
Should be more advisory	1		1	
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments	1		1	
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role				
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	7	Ø	7	7

Table B. 14 RESPONSE RATE FOR SOUTHEAST ALBERTA RPC, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total No. of Municipalities	% Response
County	1	2	50
Municipal District	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	2	50

COUNTY: The one respondent felt that the RPC was too restrictive with regard to subdivisions; was not sympathetic to the needs and requests of local Council; and as a result, it was felt that the RPC was not very effective.

Table B. 15 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
SOUTHEAST ALBERTA RPC

Major Issues	County	Municipal District	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				Ø
Doing a good job				
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise				
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				2
Slow to respond				
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias				
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective	1		1	
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy	1		1	
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures				
Geographical area too large				
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				Ø
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB				
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				1
Should be more advisory	1		1	
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role				
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	3	Ø	3	3

Table B. 16 RESPONSE RATE FOR MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS REGION, RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY MUNICIPAL STATUS

	Responses	Total Number of Municipalities	% Response
County	2	10	20
Municipal District	0	4	0
TOTAL	2	14	14

COUNTY: One county was pleased with the service from DMA

The other county felt that there would be several disadvantages to belonging to a RPC
a) the regions are too large
b) they tend to be urban-oriented
c) they are not working well.

Table B. 17 COMMENTS OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
DMA REGION

Major Issues	County	Municipal District	Issue Total	Sectional Total
Advantages & Benefits				Ø
Doing a good job				
Regional perspective to municipal planning				
Forum for conflict resolution				
Availability of planning expertise				
Encourage organized regional development				
Essential to small municipalities				
Disadvantages & Shortcomings				2
Slow to respond				
Rural and small town membership bias - urban membership bias	1		1	
Regional plan too specific for good regional perspective				
Too dictatorial-loss of local autonomy				
Too much provincial interference				
Overlapping functions and loyalties				
Errors in legal procedures				
Geographical area too large	1		1	
Members lack information about others' issues and areas				
Inequities in provincial/municipal funding				
APB hearings too complex				
RPC problems in competing with private enterprise for staff				
Too many committees and meetings				
No coordination with bordering regions				
A source of friction				
Interpersonal management problems				
Operating Conditions				1
Growth pressures				
Isolated-no need for RPC				
Good service from DMA/APB	1		1	
Commission leadership				
Recommendations				Ø
Should be more advisory				
Should be primarily S.A.A. - S.A.A. to local municipal governments				
Clarify provincial role - clarify RPC role				
Need for boundary changes				
Need for local RPC offices				
Need for Alberta-trained planners				
Do not wish membership in RPC				
Need more information about/by RPCs				
Need for change in membership representation				
Need orientation for new members				
TOTAL	3	Ø	3	3

N.L.C. - B.N.C.
3 3286 06737489 8